

MEMORANDUM

To: Tenmile South Helena Forest Restoration Committee, the City of Helena, stakeholders, resources, and media

Date: September 19, 2017

Re: Meeting notes for Thursday, **September 7, 2017** Collaborative meeting from 1:30pm-3:30pm in room 426 of the City-County Building

Attendance

Collaborative Committee Members – Chairman Joe Cohenour, conservation organization representative, Co-Vice Chair Jordan Alexander, fire community representative, Jeff Chaffee, industry representative, Brad Langsather, City of Helena representative (for Ron Alles), Doug Powell, citizen at-large, Cory Kirsch, Jefferson County Representative

Resource – Sarah Elkins (City of Helena)

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:30PM

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING APPROVED

REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes requested or suggested.

HEAR THE PUBLIC

No comments, no members of the public in attendance.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

- TSHC re-authorization – The city commission unanimously voted to approve the renewal of the Tenmile /South Helena Forest Collaborative Committee

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Joe noted the Helena-Lewis & Clark Forest Plan will be out this fall. Any field trips will be planned after fire season.

Joe mentioned the Johnny Crow Project that was worked on by the Elkhorn Collaborative was sued; it was a categorical exclusion, not an EIS. It was mostly using prescribed fire, with **limited no** commercial harvest **like the TMSH**. Discussion ensued regarding the potential for litigation of the TMSH project. It was suggested the Collaborative file in support of the Forest Service process and decision if there is a legal challenge. There may be some legal assistance or support from the City if the Collaborative requests it. To have standing, the Collaborative will need to file an objection(s) to the FEIS/Draft ROD within 45 days of issuance on August 27, 2017.

Business for this meeting was then focused on review of FEIS/Draft ROD issued for the Tenmile-South Helena Project. The group decided to assess whether Collaborative comments on the DEIS for the project were addressed in the FEIS/DROD. We broke into two groups to evaluate Forest Service responses to the ten comments submitted in December 2016. Each group reported on their findings as outlined below.

FEIS/ROD issued on 8/27/17:

9.1 Fire & Fuel

2. Not addressed in FEIS, more of a timeline issue. Keep comment.
4. Beyond scope of EIS, timeline issue. Keep comment.

9.2 Hydrology

1. Comment addressed.

Tenmile/South Helena Forest Restoration Committee Meeting

Contact the collaborative at: tenmilecollaborative@helenamt.gov

June 14, 2017

2. Not well addressed in Introduction. Covered within document.
- 9.3 Threaten, Endangered, and Sensitive Wildlife Species
1. Unit 159 Goshawk nest has been identified and buffered. Comment on Unit 142a on BLM land not addressed, advise FS & BLM that Goshawk nest needs to be identified and buffered.
- 9.4 Public Safety
8. Keep Recommendation, timeline issue with specifics to come later, likely addressed in contract for trail work.
- 9.5 Recreational Use
- Keep – Collaborative would like to see Trail # 348 (switchback trail) contour more.
- 9.6 IRAs
1. Reiterate Recommendation against use of mechanized equipment in IRA, except in PL buffers.
- 9.7 Transportation
1. Met culvert requirements. Road 1814 obliteration to one track met partially. Okay with names of trails.
- 9.8 Watershed Protection
2. Not addressed in general. Dealt with in roads section.
- 9.9 Air Quality
- 1 -6 Jeff to review and note areas not addressed in documents. Email to Brad to include with other comments.
- 9.10 Socioeconomic Impacts
1. Treatments appear to be scheduled. Reiterate that treatment doesn't interfere with recreation season.

New Recommendations

- Historic Trails appear okay.
- New trail construction
- BLM – not defined, keep Alt. 4 design criteria. Okay with road closures, support emergency access.
- Seasonal Closure
- Object to no seasonal closure.

FUTURE MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS:

Field trip ideas: See areas where treatment occurred in the past 5-8 years, and places where there was no treatment prior to a wildfire (possibly Mann Gulch/Meriwether)

See area where an excavator was used to pile larger fuels and chipping occurred.

Locations:

- City properties with chipping and chip distribution
- Telegraph Trail
- Flume
- Capital 360 project areas
- Mann Gulch/Meriwether
- Prescribed fire area on Grizzly Gulch (again, 2 years after our last visit)

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:00PM